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TITLE: HIV Prevention Case Management for Incarcerated Persons: Maryland's Unique Approach

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ISSUE: Most individuals who are incarcerated have a history of engaging in some form of risk behavior for transmission of HIV and, therefore, would benefit from HIV prevention intervention services known to be effective. The goal of the Maryland Prevention Case Management (PCM) program is to provide counseling and educational services to inmates and assist them in adopting safer behaviors to remain seronegative after returning to the community or, if seropositive, reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to others.

SETTING: Four pre-release units within the Division of Correction, Maryland Department of Public Safety, and local detention centers in 14 Maryland counties. The PCM program targets inmates who are within 6 months of release from incarceration.

PROJECT: Prevention Case Management is a series of client-centered counseling and educational interventions, as well as the provision of more traditional case management services. Two of the educational modules utilized are mandatory in order to establish program consistency statewide. A series of reporting and tracking forms have been developed to assist with program monitoring and evaluation of client participation, including a post-release component. The program is evaluated via a self-efficacy (SE) instrument developed to measure attitudes and intent to change behaviors regarding condom use, harm reduction practices involving drug paraphernalia and risk reduction practice while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

RESULTS: There were three scales on the pre and posttest SE survey to measure changes in individuals participating in PCM. Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvements on all three scales, although the overall changes were small in magnitude. Inmates who completed PCM spent an average of 10 hours in the intervention. The greater amount of time a participant was involved in PCM individual sessions, the greater likelihood he/she would have an improved score.

LESSONS LEARNED: The small improvements demonstrated in the post-intervention scores could be attributed to the numerous psychosocial needs of the inmates which had to be addressed in conjunction with the HIV prevention services. In order to implement PCM successfully, program goals and objectives must be communicated to all correctional staff to ensure their support and cooperation with scheduling and transporting inmates to their individual sessions.

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